

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant responds herein to the Office Action dated August 28, 2003.

The Examiner has only considered claims 4 and 9-12, which are directed to the species of Figure 1.

Claims 4 and 9-12 are asserted to be obvious over Nakamura (5,627,583) in view of Kato (4,831,444). Reconsideration is requested in view of the amendments to the claims herein and the following remarks.

The pending claims deal with one of the problems that are associated with providing a system where the imaging components are provided separately of the signal processing and displaying components with the two subsystems being connected by a cable whose length is not predetermined.

As presently amended, independent claim 4 is further directed to such an endoscopic function adjusting circuit with a delay circuit, in which the effects of signal delays in the signal cable are ameliorated or accounted for by adjusting the signal timing of the solid-state image pickup device.

Strictly by way of illustration and to facilitate the understanding of claim 4 (without an intention to limit the same), reference is made to the exemplary embodiment of Figure 2. The delay circuit 35 tailors and adjusts the signals being provided to the imaging device 26 by being pre-processed and the pre-amplified and otherwise shaped in the preamplifier 38. As a result, the video signal being output from the CCD has the right characteristics and timings that suit the needs of the digital signal processor 32.

The present invention is an advance over the technology disclosed in the secondary Kato reference cited by the Examiner for the proposition that it is known to provide delay circuits, such as the delay circuit 36 shown in Figure 1 and Figures 12A-12D, as stated in the Office Action.

Respectfully, in the Kato document, the delay circuit does not at all affect any of the timing or the signal waveshape that drives the CCD 20. See, for example, Figure 1 of the Kato document.

Therefore, in the prior art, the signal timing of the solid-state image pickup device, such as the CCD 20 in Figure 1 of the reference, are not adjusted at all. The delay circuits in the various embodiments of this reference control the timing signal for the signal processor 30. This creates a situation where the tail wags the dog, rather than the other way around.

In the present invention, as illustrated in Figure 2 of the instant application and as recited in independent claim 4, the delay element is interposed in such a position and is so situated, that it controls the timing to the CCD, image pickup device and it is at a location where the digital signal process can adjust its waveform in a way that works best for optimizing the overall operation and efficiencies, as well as versatility, of the device.

The expedient of the present invention, as presently claimed, is therefore not disclosed nor suggested in the prior art.

All of the remaining claims in the application include the limitations of independent claim 4 and impose further limitations thereon which further distances them from the prior art. As such, none of the claims in the application can be said to be rendered obvious by the prior art of record.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, allow the claims as amended and pass this case to issue.

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